

# Important Information About Your Rates

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

When: Tuesday, March 20, 2001, 6:00 p.m.  
Where: Maine Public Utilities Commission  
Hearing Room (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)  
242 State Street  
Augusta, Maine

When: Thursday, March 22, 2001, 6:00 p.m.  
Where: Skowhegan Community Center  
Poulin Drive  
Skowhegan, Maine

Storm date: Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 p.m.

Storm date: Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m.

Directions to Skowhegan Community Center:

- 1) From downtown Skowhegan, follow Route 2 West out of Skowhegan towards Norridgewock. Travel 2 miles and turn left after the Kyes Motel onto Poulin Drive. Follow Poulin Drive to the community center.
- 2) From Norridgewock, follow Route 2 East towards Skowhegan. Travel 3 miles and turn right after the State Police barracks onto Poulin Drive. Follow Poulin Drive to the community center.

The hearings will be held by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") to consider proposed changes in your local rates. If approved, the new rates will probably be effective in June, 2001. You are invited to attend and provide written or oral comments on these proposed changes. You can also file written comments directly with the Commission either before or after this hearing. The deadline for receipt of such written comments is Thursday March 29, 2001.

Several years ago the Maine Legislature passed a law (35-A M.R.S.A. Sec. 7101-B) mandating a reduction in the intrastate access rates charged by all local exchange telephone companies, including TDS TELECOM. Intrastate access rates are charged to long distance providers like Verizon and AT+T. These access charges are for the necessary connection to TDS TELECOM's network and to your phone line so that long distance telephone service can be provided within the state of Maine. For TDS TELECOM, in order for access rates to go down as mandated by the legislature, local rates will have to be adjusted. TDS TELECOM has been working with the Commission and the Office of the Public Advocate to implement this law for several years. As a part of that process, last year TDS TELECOM filed a general rate case with the Commission. In your August or September, 2000 bill you received notice of that filing and were offered an opportunity to participate in the first phase of that review: an examination of the company's costs to ensure that all costs were reasonable and appropriate. That first phase recently resulted in an agreement between the company and the Public Advocate on those costs.

The agreement recommends changes to local and access rates to achieve the Legislature's goal of lowering intrastate access rates where-ever possible while retaining reasonable local rates that are comparable to those charged in similarly sized exchanges. This agreement is in the form of a written Stipulation that was filed with the Commission on February 16, 2001. The more significant of the proposed local residence and business rate changes are listed below. All of the rate changes are the subject of this public hearing.

A few of the key considerations that were used to determine new local rates were:

1. The monthly rate for basic residential service (the R-1 rate) will increase by an amount equal to 50% of the difference between your current monthly rate and the current rate charged by Verizon (formerly Bell Atlantic) for a similarly sized calling area. **(Hampden and Somerset only)** This R-1 rate increase will not exceed \$2.50 per month.
2. **(Hartland, Warren and West Penobscot only)** Touch-Call service has been eliminated as a separate charge on your local bill. Every customer will receive Touch-Call service without charge.
3. The monthly rate for basic business service (the B-1 rate) will be set equal to 150% of the new residential rate.

4. Other local service rates, as well as charges for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance also will receive rate adjustments.

After this increase your local rates will still be less than (or not greater than) the local rates charged by Verizon (formerly Bell Atlantic) for a similarly sized calling area.

To present your views on these proposed rate changes, you should either (a) appear at the public hearing and offer oral or written comments, or (b) without attending the hearing, file written comments directly with the Administrative Director, Public Utilities Commission, (address provided below) so such comments are received by Thursday, March 29, 2001. In addition, you can request to be placed on the service list as an interested party to receive copies of any future notices and orders in this proceeding. If you need information about which method of participation you should choose, or assistance in participating in the Commission's review of the proposed rate changes, contact the Commission or Public Advocate. You may receive a copy of the recent Stipulation from either of those or from TDS TELECOM. Useful contacts and addresses are:

Administrative Director  
Maine Public Utilities Commission  
242 State St  
Augusta, ME 04333-0018  
Tel: (207) 287-3831

Public Advocate  
State House Station 112  
Hallowell, ME 04333-0012  
attn: Bill Black  
Tel: (207) 287-2445

TDS TELECOM  
(local business office)  
(local address)  
  
Tel: (local or 800 #)

This notice has been issued pursuant to Chapter 110 of the Rules of Practice and Procedures of the Maine Public Utilities Commission, which has responsibility under Maine Law for regulating the rates and practices of Maine public utilities. The examination will be conducted under the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Maine Public Utilities Commission as set forth in Title 35-A of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

### **TDS Telecom exchanges (except Exeter exchange and Island Tel.)**

[Current Rates, New Rates, and Rate Changes to be listed here]

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The hearings will be held by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") to consider proposed changes in your local rates. If approved, the new rates will probably be effective in June, 2001. You are invited to attend and provide written or oral comments on these proposed changes. You can also file written comments directly with the Commission either before or after this hearing. The deadline for receipt of such written comments is Thursday March 29, 2001.

Several years ago the Maine Legislature passed a law (35-A M.R.S.A. Sec. 7101-B) mandating a reduction in the intrastate access rates charged by all local exchange telephone companies, including TDS TELECOM. Intrastate access rates are charged to long distance providers like Verizon and AT+T. These access charges are for the necessary connection to TDS TELECOM's network and to your phone line so that long distance telephone service can be provided within the state of Maine. For TDS TELECOM, in order for access rates to go down as mandated by the legislature, local rates will have to be adjusted. TDS TELECOM has been working with the Commission and the Office of the Public Advocate to implement this law for several years. As a part of that process, last year TDS TELECOM filed a general rate case with the Commission. In your August or September, 2000 bill you received notice of that filing and were offered an opportunity to participate in the first phase of that review: an examination of the company's costs to ensure that all costs were reasonable and appropriate. That first phase recently resulted in an agreement between the company and the Public Advocate on those costs.

The agreement recommends changes to local and access rates to achieve the Legislature's goal of lowering intrastate access rates where-ever possible while retaining reasonable local rates that are comparable to those charged in similarly sized exchanges. This agreement is in the form of a written Stipulation that was filed with the Commission on February 16, 2001. The more significant of the proposed local residence and business rate changes are listed below. All of the rate changes are the subject of this public hearing.

A few of the key considerations that were used to determine new local rates were:

- 1) The monthly rate for basic Premium residential service (the Premium R-1 rate) will not change. The monthly rate for basic Economy residential service (the Economy R-1 rate) will increase by an amount equal to 50% of the difference between your current monthly rate and the current rate charged by Verizon (formerly Bell Atlantic) for Economy service in a similarly sized calling area.
- 2) Touch- Call service has been eliminated as a separate charge on your local bill. Every customer will receive Touch-Call service without charge.
- 3) The monthly rate for basic business service (the B-1 rate) will be set equal to 150% of the new residential rate.

- 4) Other local service rates, as well as charges for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance also will receive rate adjustments.

To present your views on these proposed rate changes, you should either (a) appear at the public hearing and offer oral or written comments, or (b) without attending the hearing, file written comments directly with the Administrative Director, Public Utilities Commission, (address provided below) so such comments are received by Thursday, March 29, 2001. In addition, you can request to be placed on the service list as an interested party to receive copies of any future notices and orders in this proceeding. If you need information about which method of participation you should choose, or assistance in participating in the Commission's review of the proposed rate changes, contact the Commission or Public Advocate. You may receive a copy of the recent Stipulation from either of those or from TDS TELECOM. Useful contacts and addresses are:

Administrative Director  
Maine Public Utilities Commission  
242 State St  
Augusta, ME 04333-0018  
Tel: (207) 287-3831

Public Advocate  
State House Station 112  
Hallowell, ME 04333-0012  
attn: Bill Black  
Tel: (207) 287-2445

TDS TELECOM-Corinna  
Spring Street  
P O Box 0  
Corinna, ME 04928-0468  
Tel: (207) 278-9911

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**TDS Telecom Exeter exchange**

[Current Rates, New Rates, and Rate Changes to be listed here]

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- 2) From Norridgewock, follow Route 2 East towards Skowhegan. Travel 3 miles and turn right after the State Police barracks onto Poulin Drive. Follow Poulin Drive to the community center.

The hearings will be held by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") to consider proposed changes in your rates for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance. If approved, the new rates will probably be effective in June, 2001. You are invited to attend and provide written or oral comments on these proposed changes. You can also file written comments directly with the Commission either before or after this hearing. The deadline for receipt of such written comments is Thursday, March 29, 2001.

Several years ago the Maine Legislature passed a law (35-A M.R.S.A. Sec. 7101-B) mandating a reduction in the intrastate access rates charged by all local exchange telephone companies, including TDS TELECOM. Intrastate access rates are charged to long distance providers like Verizon and AT+T. These access charges are for the necessary connection to TDS TELECOM's network and to your phone line so that long distance telephone service can be provided within the state of Maine. TDS TELECOM has been working with the Commission and the Office of the Public Advocate to implement this law for several years. As a part of that process, last year TDS TELECOM filed a general rate case with the Commission. In your August or September, 2000 bill you received notice of that filing and were offered an opportunity to participate in the first phase of that review: an examination of the company's costs to ensure that all costs were reasonable and appropriate. That first phase recently resulted in an agreement between the company and the Public Advocate on those costs.

This agreement is in the form of a written Stipulation that was filed with the Commission on February 16, 2001. This agreement recommends no change in your rate for basic monthly service. However, the agreement recommends changes in your rates for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance. These rate changes are the subject of this public hearing. These rates are changing to provide some reduction in intrastate access rates and to establish comparable rates among the 6 TDS telephone companies in Maine.

To present your views on these proposed rate changes, you should either (a) appear at the public hearing and offer oral or written comments, or (b) without attending the hearing, file written comments directly with the Administrative Director, Public Utilities Commission, (address provided below) so such comments are received by Thursday, March 29, 2001. In addition, you can request to be placed on the service list as an interested party to receive copies of any future notices and orders in this proceeding. If you need information about which method of participation you should choose, or assistance in participating in the Commission's review of the proposed rate changes, contact the Commission or Public Advocate. You may receive a copy of the recent Stipulation from either of those or from TDS TELECOM. Useful contacts and addresses are:

## **Island only (excluding Isle au Haut)**

## **Attachment 3**

Administrative Director  
Maine Public Utilities Commission  
242 State St  
Augusta, ME 04333-0018  
Tel: (207) 287-3831

Public Advocate  
State House Station 112  
Hallowell, ME 04333-0012  
attn: Bill Black  
Tel: (207) 287-2445

TDS TELECOM-Island  
99 Union Street  
Warren, ME 04864-4263  
Tel: (800) 274-9902

This notice has been issued pursuant to Chapter 110 of the Rules of Practice and Procedures of the Maine Public Utilities Commission, which has responsibility under Maine Law for regulating the rates and practices of Maine public utilities. The examination will be conducted under the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Maine Public Utilities Commission as set forth in Title 35-A of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

### **TDS Telecom exchanges of Island Tel. (except Isle Au Haut)**

[Current Rates, New Rates, and Rate Changes to be listed here]

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The hearings will be held by the Maine Public Utilities Commission (the "Commission") to consider proposed changes in your local rates. If approved, the new rates will probably be effective in June, 2001. You are invited to attend and provide written or oral comments on these proposed changes. You can also file written comments directly with the Commission either before or after this hearing. The deadline for receipt of such written comments is Thursday, March 29, 2001.

Several years ago the Maine Legislature passed a law (35-A M.R.S.A. Sec. 7101-B) mandating a reduction in the intrastate access rates charged by all local exchange telephone companies, including TDS TELECOM. Intrastate access rates are charged to long distance providers like Verizon and AT+T. These access charges are for the necessary connection to TDS TELECOM's network and to your phone line so that long distance telephone service can be provided within the state of Maine. TDS TELECOM has been working with the Commission and the Office of the Public Advocate to implement this law for several years. As a part of that process, last year TDS TELECOM filed a general rate case with the Commission. In your August or September, 2000 bill you received notice of that filing and were offered an opportunity to participate in the first phase of that review: an examination of the company's costs to ensure that all costs were reasonable and appropriate. That first phase recently resulted in an agreement between the company and the Public Advocate on those costs.

The agreement recommends a reduction in your rates of basic monthly service and intrastate access as well as adjustments in your rates for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance. This agreement is in the form of a written Stipulation that was filed with the Commission on February 16, 2001. The more significant of the proposed local residence and business rate changes are listed below. All of the rate changes are the subject of this public hearing.

A few of the key considerations that were used to determine new local rates were:

- 1) The monthly rates for basic residential and business service (the R-1 and B-1 rates) will decrease to equal the current monthly rates charged to customers on Matinicus and Swan's Island. Other local service rates will receive similar reductions.
- 2) The rates for installation, custom calling features, and inside wire maintenance are changing in order to permit some reduction in intrastate access rates and to establish comparable rates among the 6 TDS telephone companies in Maine.

To present your views on these proposed rate changes, you should either (a) appear at the public hearing and offer oral or written comments, or (b) without attending the hearing, file written comments directly to the Administrative Director, Public Utilities Commission, (address provided below) so such comments are received by Thursday, March 29, 2001. In addition, you can request to be placed on the service list as an interested party to receive copies of any future notices and orders in the proceeding. If you need information about which method of

## **Isle au Haut only**

## **Attachment 3**

participation you should choose, or assistance in participating in the Commission's review of the proposed rate changes, contact the Commission or Public Advocate. You may receive a copy of the recent Stipulation from either of those or from TDS TELECOM. Useful contacts and addresses are:

Administrative Director  
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Augusta, ME 04333-0018  
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### **TDS Telecom Isle Au Haut Exchange**

[Current Rates, New Rates, and Rate Changes to be listed here]